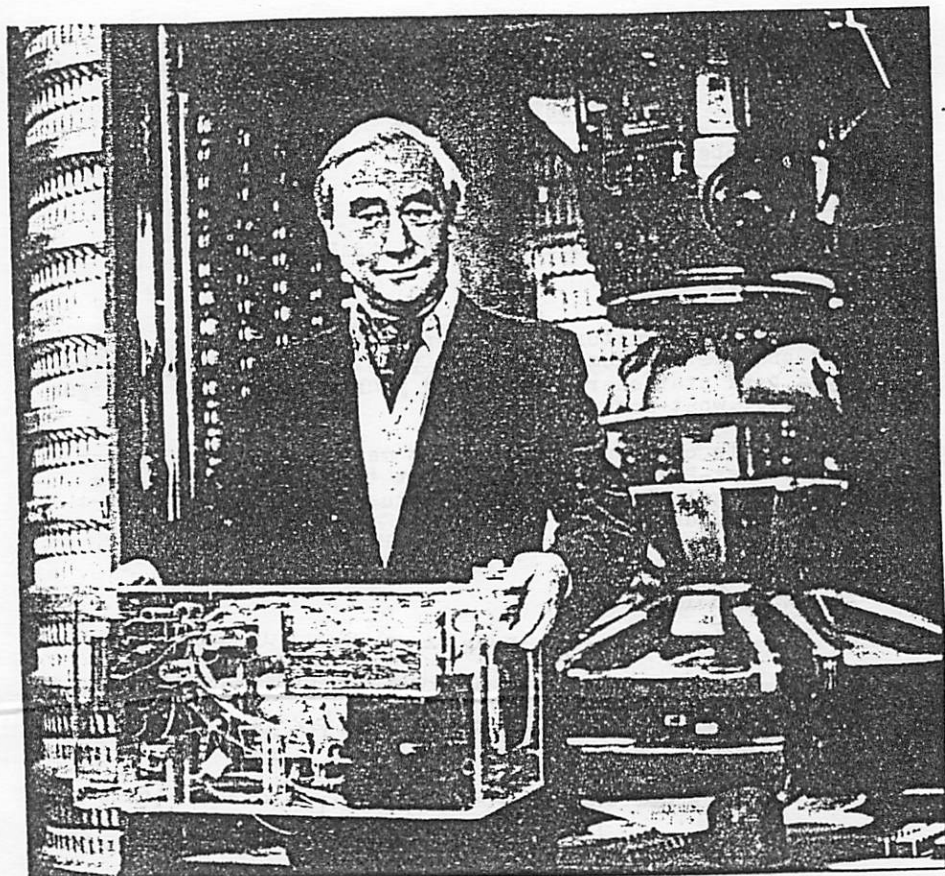


Oracle 17



Low's has been the subject of Oracle
17 (a business of the 21st) at
120. For more on this, see the
Oracle 17

ORACLE

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NEWSLETTER NO. 17

September/October

Editorial

Go to college, gone to homework, gone INSANE!!!!!!!!!!

Presidents Bits

Hello! Your Editor is now a part-time student up to her teleport bracelet in homework, your president is a temp. working at Lloyds bank stationery Dept., and your club sec. is a morgue attendant.....what more can I say?

Now on to club business and let me first print a letter from Janet Lees-Price. It seems I got the address of Paul's publisher wrong last time round, so you can read it for yourself this time, okay?

Dear Susan.

Thank you for your newsletter. I'd have to get the typewriter mended as it's obvious my dreadful writing is difficult for you to read.

Paul's book will be published by Corgi Press. My series is for the BBC and called "The Chelworth Inheritance".

Paul's book will be published by Corgi Press (a division of Hyle Stuart) at 120. Enterprise Ave. Secaucus. New Jersey 07094.

Now, as the postal strike has put us a month behind with the newsletter, I've decided to reschedule them. This is so you'll still have enough time to send articles in before the next N/L. The new schedule won't affect people's renewals at all. You'll still get 4 N/Ls before you have to renew, so don't worry. New dates for N/Ls are:-

December - Krach - June - September

Also we are loosing our Cracle N/L proof reader. Jan is going to college for 3 years to study America. This includes a trip out to the states, where she intends to make her fortune. Good luck Jan, and can you fit me into your suitcase? No? Ch, okay. Anyone volunteering to take her place as proof reader?

Finally a tribute to Roy Kinnear who died this month. He was one of my favourite guests in B7, his character one of my favourites. From what I have read of his time in the show, he was a favourite with the regular cast in the show too. I know I'm going to miss him, as I'm sure we all will.

A sober note to end on, but enjoy the rest of the N/L.

H.B.

Articles in to the club address by 7th December, 1989.

Your renewal is due if a cross appears here..... Yearly membership fee is £5.00 (£7.50 overseas) plus 4 self addressed sticky labels (Could I please have these labels from everyone - they are very important). Please make cheques/PO/IMCs etc payable to Susan J. King. PLEASE NOTE: No IRCs or Foreign Cheques will be accepted for membership payments. If sending U.S. CASH please enclose \$15 (this fee includes the increase in membership and the bank charges we incur when changing to sterling). Thank you.

TALK RIGHT BACK

Robert Gardner

Just a short note to tell you how much I enjoyed 'ORACLE' N/L 16. Believe me, it was truly appreciated ((That's really nice to know. Sometimes I wonder what I'm doing, then I get a nice letter.....sometimes - HB))

I really liked Clare Nicholson's latest story. It made me smile a lot and laugh out loud several times (I was stared at strangely by passers-by, but I ignored them - there's true dedication for you!!!)

Cheers - Keep the 'Blake's 7' Spirit alive and keep an eye out for 'Feds.'

((Robert had broken his arm when he wrote this LoC. The Club sec. is also in plaster.....what is it about this club that has people injuring themselves.....! Was it something I said? - HB))

Nicola Barnard

Erm....yes, I am sorry and....erm, yes, I have let my membership renewal slide for six months. I'm sorry, I really, really am - there that's cleared the grovelling out of my system for a bit. ((I always feel better when the members are in the grovelling mode! - HB))

Since I've been out of touch for six months, I don't know if this will count as an LoC, ((Believe me, we take anything! - HB)) but I'd just like to comment on Jeff Haughton too and agree with Rowena on her points defending references to 'Alas Smith and Jones,' and tearing limb from limb. Yes, Jeff, it will probably come as a shock to know that we do agree on some things.

Also, one other thing. Top marks everybody for concocting - Rebel Force! ((Now termed SheRebs Nicola - HB)) Wonderful idea!! Whoever thought of it deserves a medal - the Rebel's Star or something! ((I thought of it, and sometimes I think I deserve an appointment with the local headshrink! - HB)) Erm, if anyone tells me they've scrapped it in the past six months - I'm going to be very upset.....

((Anything but, SheReb 1 is still available - \$1.50 SheReb Members, \$1.70 non-SheReb members, and SheReb 2 is now out priced the same - HB))

Anyway, gotta go, and I'm enclosing a story to make up for my ...erm....lapse. That should make you feel better, Susan.

Clare Nicholson

I feel that I must congratulate everyone on all the articles on Blake's 7 that have been appearing on 'Points of View' ((But have you noticed, they're never written by anyone you

actually know! - HB)) On nearly every programme we have had some mention of our favourite BBC production, and so we should too!

One question though, are the letters coming from just the fan club members or is there a greater contingency out there, as yet undiscovered by fan clubs, who fight on their own to get the best programme in science fiction history back on our screens? ((You're right there are people out there that know nothing about fan clubs....but the problem with that is that to find out about clubs you have to belong to a club to see the ads! Also, not everyone who likes B7 is a S.F. fan, so even ads in the big S.F. magazines seldom work. Anyone got a solution to this problem? - HB))

I certainly hope the BBC are getting the message.

Brian P. James

Has anyone visited the 'Outer City' scene of the massacre of the renegades in 'THE WAY BACK'? ((Erm...no - HB))

I went 'there' a few months ago, well actually I went to the location. It's at Monkton Farleigh in Wiltshire. Originally it was a limestone mine that, in the second world war, was converted into Europe's largest underground ammunition dump. Well worth a visit if you're in the area, but as its a massive 20 miles series of tunnels 100 feet underground, its not everybody's idea of a day out. Don't worry though, the tour only lasts for 2½ miles, but be warned, the temperature down there is a constant 8°C.

Rowena Sayer

Okay, Susan, I know I'm late. Yes folks, this LoC's late - now didn't you all just want to know that?

I've given my thoughts about 'Rebels' Exposed' to Susan (and yes they were clean!) Basically if the majority of the membership want the listings then I'll carry on collecting, and giving the WP a headache; but, if you don't want them I'm not exactly going to cry about it because it'll give me time to do something else. ((Well, no-one bothered to give an opinion on this matter, so I'll make a Presidential decision and say its cut.....unless someone tells me otherwise. Go do something else with your time, Rowena, and enjoy it! - HB))

About technical articles - if they are submitted, and make sense to the editor, I think it's only fair to the author to print them. It's then up to each individual reader to decide whether to read it or not. Surely a N/L should be rather like a magazine? Who actually reads every word of a magazine? Not many. ((The editor? - HB)) People read selectively and this should apply to a N/L as well. Personally I don't read the technical stuff - sorry lads - but I'm not particularly scientifically minded, and I honestly don't have the time to sit down and work out what the articles are saying. However,

I'm sure many others find them interesting and understand them, and those readers shouldn't be deprived of these offerings just because scientific-morons like me aren't interested. After all "you can't please all the people all the time" and variety should be the keyword for any publication. So, as I said before, it's up to the readers to be selective as long as the choice is given them in the first place.

On a lighter note - I think Jennifer could have a gold star Susan. After all she did make an effort to answer the questions whereas a lot of people didn't. ((I think she should be given a gold star for all the effort she put into the 'Blake's Seven Summed Up' Sections she did for me. I haven't had the time or the urge to sum up Breakdown yet, so it may not appear this issue. Thanks Jennifer! - HB))

Hm, the going rate for sisters isn't really high enough to buy a WP, I'm afraid Madam President. I know, I've tried it! ((Not even when they're built like a brick wall and have highly developed minds? - HB))

Of course Luke is Leia's brother - how could I forget? He's also Vader's son, Han's friend, Kenobi and Yoda's apprentice, the robots master.....well I think I've got that firmly fixed in my mind now.

One question arises from the last N/L. Who let Clare out? ((Now, now, she's one of my best writers! - HB)) Now I know I have a really odd sense of humour but that story was weird! Like in far-out man! I found it rather Douglas Adams in some ways, except he doesn't write about carnivorous ducks! ORACLE seems to attract some really strange people, Susan. I wonder why? ((Like club, like President, I'm afraid - HB))

Jeff Haughton

((He didn't write this down as an LoC, but I'm sure he won't mind me printing bits of it - HB))

Clare Nicholson's story 'Adventures of the Abnormal Kind' was quite brilliant. I wish I'd wrote myself. It's quite possibly the funniest story I've ever read in Oracle.

I agree with you about the dreadful article on B7 in Starburst 114. Do you realise 'Alec Charles', if that's his real name, actually got paid money to write that article. I think if you're naming names then Stephen Payne, the Editor, must also take some of the blame for deciding to publish it. (Maybe Alec Charles used to work for the Guardian, before they hired proof readers). I'd recommend to anyone buying Starburst on a regular basis stop doing so and buy a magazine called 'Time Screen' instead, it's much better and that article in Starburst would have been thrown in the bin before their Editor read the first paragraph. Time Screen is run by fans who at least check their facts before printing. ((It's actually a very good magazine - HB))

Jamie C. Ritchey - USA

Here's the Destiny 2 report you asked for. I hope it's interesting. The convention was fun but totally exhausting and involved a lot of work beforehand. I've just included a copy of the programme and a couple of pictures, one of myself as the 'Abyssmal Guardian'. I hope Paul Darrow would have thought it was funny because the audience sure did. The rubber chicken, 'Corunzun Junior' was a real big hit.

Deadlines are non-existent to my brain as far as writing goes. Inspiration either comes or it doesn't, usually it doesn't. This is only the second story I've ever attempted. I'm collaborating with my friend, Dee Beetem, and it's been a great help to me. She's been doing this for years and even published her own Star Trek zine years ago. I'm afraid it's taken me so long to finish my part of the work that we may have already missed a deadline she was planning on. I'm easily distracted and would rather read fan fiction than write it. That's one reason my submissions for you have been so few. It takes me so long to finish anything, you've already moved on to something else. ((That's fine. Still send it in. That's why we have a section called 'Delayed Reaction.' - HB))

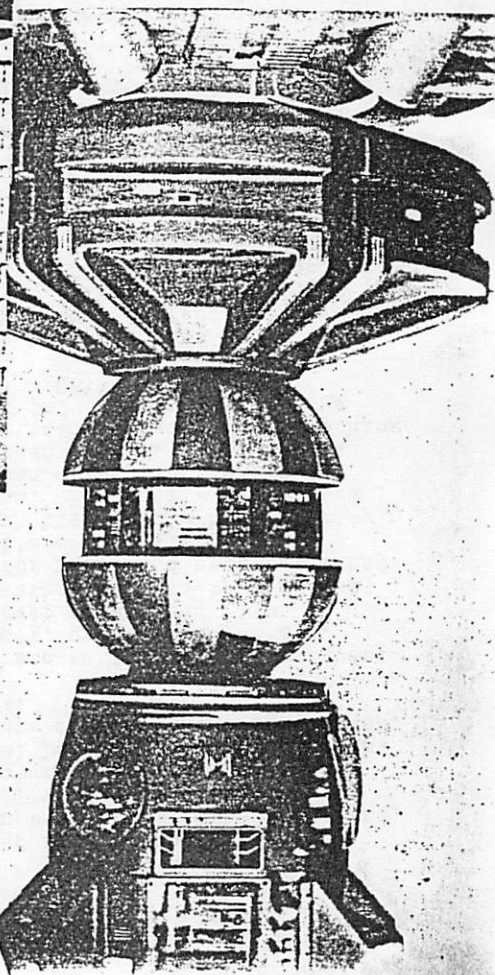
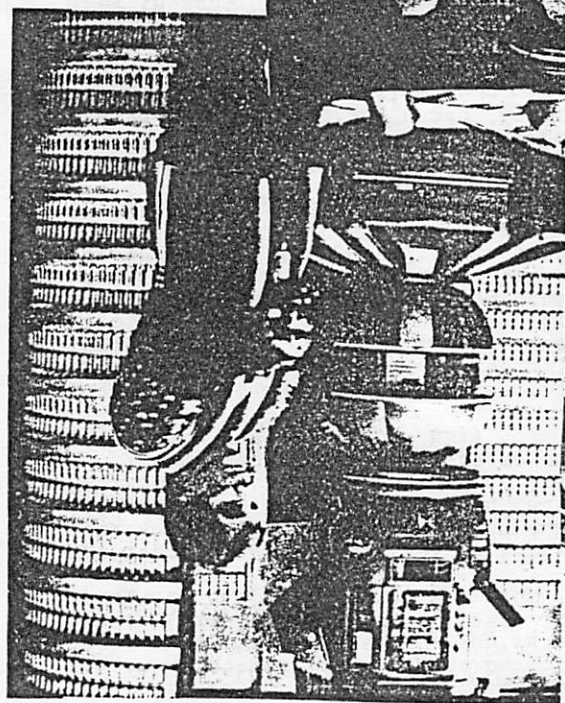
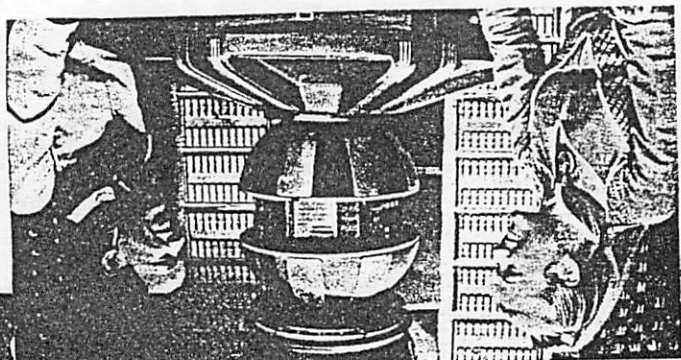
The last I heard about Paul Darrow's book was that the publisher backed out. Do you have any more current info? ((As far as I know the deal went ahead. The only news I have is that I spelt everything wrong last N/L. Janet has promised to fix the typewriter and type to me.....I hope. I'm useless at reading handwriting. - HB))

Also a bit of news for your Star Trek fans. ST, The Next Generation killed off one of its major characters. Lt. Tasha Yar died at the 'hands' of one of the most ridiculous TV monsters since Doctor Who's more memorable ones. It was an anthropomorphic oil slick. You would have to see it to believe it, and even then you wouldn't believe it. ((Having now seen all the ST:TNG this country has to offer, I can only say 'good' when I think of Yar dying. I'm worried about Jane though. She isn't a ST:TNG fan, but she thinks Data's cute!!!! - HB))

Jacqueline Pearce has a small part in an ABC network mini-series called 'The Bourne Identity' from Robert Ludlum's book. She played a boutique owner named 'Madame Jackie' involved with an international assassin. She was a bit of a wimp and was killed off. What was exasperating was her voice was dubbed by someone else. They didn't use her voice at all. It was distracting and her own would have been much better. ((Maybe they thought her real voice was too commanding for the type of character she was playing..... - HB))

DID YOU KNOW.....there is a 'New Avengers' episode in which Stepehn Grief appears. In the episode also appear a) an army officer with an eyepatch, b) a character named Travis.

Information supplied by John L. Paines



Rebels Rebel.....

Or should that be....

Rebels Computers.....

Zen

Of alien design he is the onboard computer for the Spaceship Liberator. He seemed to have a kind of limiter installed (rather like Gan) which did not allow him to do certain things even when expressly ordered by the crew.

Orac

A computer designed and built by Ensor, 'rescued' from the hands of the Federation by Blake. With a personality to match its creator this little machine was able to get the crew into as much trouble as it got them out of.

Slave

Servile computer onboard Scorpio. Built and designed by Dorian to massage his ego. For a computer it actually seemed very reluctant to do its job.

.. .. .

The Computers

by Henry Eggleton

Your assignment if you decide to accept it..... The wrong series I know but Susan asked me to write something on Zen, Orac and Slave and that's what it feels like. ((You know I often have to ask for articles because people rarely volunteer them. S'not my fault! - HB))

Well after that bit of waffle I suppose I ought to say something about the subjects of this article. Well, they're all computers (nothing like stating the obvious). Zen the main computer of the Liberator, whose first act when we see it is to try and kill our heroes (nothing like an optimistic start for one of the mainstays of the series). In the first series Zen was to my mind much more mysterious and a lot less helpful. If you remember (I'm sure everybody does) at first it even refused to tell the crew how to operate the teleport. This is one thing about Zen that has always puzzled me. In Redemption it operated the teleport for Altas but always refused to do the same for the crew. ((The Altas programmed it though, didn't they? - HB))

Orac, a right little ++++ and that's putting his attitude kindly. The only being on the Liberator or Scorpio that had a higher opinion of itself than Avon did about himself. A computer that could have done well to have seen a psychiatrist. It was extremely powerful but negated any help it could have given the crew due to its personality problems.

Slave the last member of the trio. A cringing bag of bolts that was even easier to intimidate than Vila. Developed by Dorian and virtually useless for anything other than a straight

forward flight.

Well Susan, there it is, mission completed. (There, you never knew I had a degree in waffle, did you? Well, it all goes to filling a newsletter). ((Henry, I never doubted you! - HB))

.. .. .

Three Faces of Peter Tuddenham
by H.B.

How many other times in Blake's Seven did we heard a Peter Tuddenham voice ring out loud and clear, telling someone to do something over a P.A. system or something? More than we spotted, I bet. But the most well known of them had to be the three computers.

Peter didn't become Orac, so we are told, until the second series. Congratulations, Peter, for making that little box of binary bits such an obnoxious 'orrible, miserable little big head! He deserved what happened to him in Shadow - the all powerful computer being invaded by an alien, outside force. It was kind of comforting to know that he had a wad of explosives inside him to stop him getting out of hand again.....but why didn't he get blown to bits in Headhunter when Muller's android took him over?

Right from the start Peter made Zen seem like the good guy of the computer team. Even when he tried to get rid of Blake, Jenna and Avon he was only protecting the ship, like what he was told to do. When Zen refused to do something you knew there had to be a good reason. Look at Breakdown. He told them not to go into the 'forbidden zone', but did they taken any notice? No!! And what happened? They nearly got sucked into a blackhole. That'll teach 'em to listen to him!

Unfortunately, Slave got on my piggin' nerves. Whether Peter meant this to happen I don't know, but that whining, miserable, slimy voice just made me want to shout at the screen! (And I often did!) It just goes to show you what an egotist will go through just to have his ego stroked. How Dorian ever managed to put up with the little creep I'll never know. Bring back Zen!

.. .. .

Zen, Orac and Slave

by Rowena Sayer

I like computers and have done ever since I suddenly realised that they are not the ultimate answer to life, the universe and everything which, in any case, is 42. A computer is only as good (or bad) as it's operator, and can not do more (though it can frequently do less) than it's actually been programmed to do. In other words, if it has been programmed to add and

subtract two digit numbers then that is what it will do; it certainly won't work out square roots or logarithms! To put it quite bluntly a computer is only human and can make mistakes. After all how can something as imperfect as mankind make something that is completely perfect? All right, I'll stop being philosophical and get on with the task in hand.

Of course no SF programme would be complete without computers. It seems to be a prerequisite for a series. However, in the case of B7 the computers were more than just pieces of hardware which calculated things or gave information. Each of them had a personality and a character all of their own - a very interesting and exciting idea - and naturally were included in the count of seven when the humans were being killed off. Series 4 had five humans and two computers to make up the required number seven). Also have you noticed that all three were extremely aptly named? The dictionary definitions are a little too long to include in this piece but go and read them, particularly 'oracle' (ORAC) - it's fascinating. ((Tell me, Rowena, are you a Spock fan? - HB))

But now to the computers themselves. The first one we met (no, it wasn't called Avon) was ZEN, and it (I get very tempted to write 'he') has to be my personal favourite of the three computers, and I freely admit I cried at his demise. Mind you, I always have had quirky tastes - Vulcan, android, mutant, computer - I really worry about me sometimes! ((I knew she was a Spock fan! - HB)) Yes, I really liked ZEN - quiet, patient, even-tempered, dependable, deferential, precise ZEN, just how I feel a computer should be. Even at the beginning when he was trying to kill our heroes he was only following his programming. After that he was definitely very much one of the seven - more of a friend by the end, rather than a computer - and I wouldn't have been at all surprised if he'd appeared as a living entity (probably, an extremely handsome one). I think remorse and true regret is shown by this particular computer when he realises that the LIBERATOR can't be saved. Despite this very human side to ZEN his primary function as a computer was as a source of information, calculation and analysis.

Then there was ORAC. Talk about a feisty old so-and-so. Of course he'd only taken on his creator's personality but I was jolly glad that they had an on/off switch for him! I didn't like him. Definitely a bent, very crotchety old man if he'd had a body! He was one of those really annoying 'know-it-alls' and 'I-told-you-sos' with a huge ego problem, if a computer can have such a thing. He obviously regarded himself as being on a plane way above humans, strange since he was actually created by a human. He was no respecter of persons, tolerating Avon but nothing more though Avon obviously thought more of it than it did of him.

Of course the problem was that ORAC was so clever that the series ran into serious danger of having it solve everything before the humans got a look in. This was an error on the part of the script writers because not only did it put them in a difficult position when it came to writing, but as I've said before I believe that a human could not create an absolutely perfect computer that could come up with all the answers -

there would be gaps. I heartily wish they'd lost him before the end of the 4th season - but, having said that, it was strange that he didn't appear in the final episode (or perhaps Servalan had got her grubby paws on him at last and was making good her escape, which would explain why she wasn't in that episode either). ORAC did not see himself as a source of information but a machine capable of rational thought so as well as providing the crew with necessary information, albeit reluctantly, he also commented and speculated all the way along the line.

The last computer was SLAVE. Dear old SLAVE. He was nice too. I have this vivid memory of Colin Jeavons playing Uriah Heap in 'David Copperfield.' He was very oily which SLAVE was not, but he was also very subservient and went around wringing his hands all the time - anyone else remember that or am I just showing my age? ((I remember it! - HB)) Anyway, that's how I see SLAVE if he had a body. SLAVE was very obsequious, but that was part of his charm. You could imagine him leaving the flight deck backwards, bowing all the way. SLAVE was there mainly to give information, and he did not seem to really like analysing the data he was given. SLAVE by name and slave by nature with, at the risk of anthropomorphising computers yet again, a strong sense of loyalty towards the crew. The last scene of him and Tarrant was superb - talk about dramatic. If anyone doubted a computer's capacity for emotion then that scene should have given them something to think about.

SLAVE was a good substitute for ZEN but never really replaced him in my affections. I think top marks must go to the writers and creator of the series in this instance for coming up with three distinctly different computers and making the viewer become involved with these inanimate objects as well as the human participants. And at this point it's only fair to congratulate Peter Tuddenham for bringing those different personalities to life. All three computers helped to give consistency and continuity to the series. When all around were losing their heads, both literally and metaphorically, and nowhere more so than in season 4, the computers stayed the same - they were like anchors amid the storms.

The crew were lucky to have three such excellent information sources and at least two really loyal creations. I know I wouldn't be without my computer and it can't do half the things those three did! I sometimes felt, though, that they didn't appreciate ZEN and SLAVE enough. Avon in particular, for a computer expert, was very blase about them. You'd have thought he'd have been far more interested in what made them function, especially ZEN as an alien computer. Perhaps it was that being members of that day and age they were so used to computers that these weren't particularly interesting. To me they were jolly fascinating and if I'd have been there I'd certainly have had my sonic screwdriver out to see what made them tick and I'm not technically minded, as long as my computer works and does more or less what I want it to do then I'm happy. I just wish mine could talk to me though. It won't even answer back when I swear at it over one of my mistakes!

LONG LIVE COMPUTERS AND MAY THEIR CHIPS GO ON FOR EVER!

No facts, but faith for lonesome Elvis

ALAN Bleasdale's Elvis Presley play *Are You Lonesome Tonight* returns to the Empire in a new production. Paul Darrow takes the role of the older Presley that was created in the original production by Martin Shaw.

He may be best known for *Blake's Seven* (playing Avon), but when Martin Shaw took the part three years ago everyone thought he was just a TV actor and his performance proved very powerful.

First produced at the Playhouse in 1985 (a fact conveniently forgotten by the London media) and seen later that year in a revised form at the Empire as part of a national tour, the play proved both popular and controversial.

Everyone of course has their own idea of Elvis Presley, and Bleasdale's version was unapologetically an apology-but not a whitewash. In the play, the older Presley is seen in all his grotesque misery, but the young Presley is shown in all his glory. The play is structured round one night near the end of Presley's life, with his story told in flashbacks. It's the most cinematic thing Bleasdale has done since his feature film *No Surrender* was rooted in realism) with the images stronger than the, unavoidably familiar, narrative. If it's not exactly a faithful biography, that's not the point. It's still faithful. Bleasdale said at the time "I was going for the truth, not the facts", and that's the only way to treat this kind of story.

The truth in the show mixes tears and thrills, fiction and facts to show the inevitable sadness of talent turning to waste and success to loneliness. Trying to pull together the contradictions on Presley's life, the play describes him as a god but shows him as all too human, a victim of consumerism and the ultimate deadening excess of the American dream.

But it doesn't forget to celebrate as well as explain, and the show is always entertaining, with spectacle, music, humour, stunning images and plenty of emotion.

Empire. 27 June-3 July

Left: Paul Darrow as the ageing Elvis

Rebels.Review

'Are You Lonesome Tonight?'

by Fliss Davies

Starring Paul Darrow, at the Alhambra Theatre, Bradford.

Okay, let's get one thing straight. I'm not in the habit of raving about Paul Darrow, but maybe this once I'll make an exception. The whole show, including Mr. Darrow's performance was excellent, and the best evenings entertainment I've had for quite a while.

I don't know much about the life of Elvis Presley, so I can't really comment on the show's interpretation of him. Basically the story featured the older Elvis (Mr. Darrow) shortly before he dies, looking back on past events in his life, including his early performances (represented by the brilliant Sean Simon as the younger Elvis). Intrigue is provided by John Wyman ('Cancer from B7') as an ex-bodyguard who threatens to write a book exposing the 'truth' about Elvis. The music is amazing, and had several of us dancing in our seats at times, and Mr. Darrow expertly disproved the old myth that he can't sing.

What more can I say? A very lively, entertaining and exciting show. If you can, go and see it. You won't regret it.

.. .. .

Mr. Presley Has Left The Theatre

by H.B.

Firstly, I'd like to take time to thank Jan - our proof reader - for providing the tickets and the room, otherwise I'd never have been able to go to Falcon and I'd never have seen Paul Darrow in 'Are You Lonesome Tonight.' Thanks buddy!

At one point we didn't think we'd make the theatre in time (what do you mean, what's new?), but we did. I have to admit to not recognising Paul until he spoke. The accent was a bit of a shock - I'm hopeless at understanding any kind of accent until I get used to it, so the first part of the play was partially lost to me. And the first time he sings is also a shock especially as Mr. Presley's maid decides to join in. An experience to be missed at all costs! Ugh! What a voice she didn't have.

The music almost blew my ears off in the tiny theatre, the machine gun gave me heart failure (Jan announced 'Oh I should have warned you about that'), the explosion repeated the performance (Jan said 'Oh I should have warned you about that') and I was nearly blinded by the suddenly bright lights (Jan said.....oh you guessed what she said).

Sean Simon was a terrific young Elvis (esp. in tight leather trousers!), Paul was a terrific older Elvis (knew he would be when I saw the hips in the panto. last year! Hmm hmm!) The play was both funny and sad, the saddest part of all being the announcement at the end 'Mr. Presley Has Left The Theatre' That kinda left a empty feeling in the theatre. I had the urge to leap up and say 'Yeah, but you can't leave it there! What happened next.' Unfortunately, not a lot more could have happened.....after all Elvis was dead.

I'm not an Elvis fan, though I was brought up with four brothers heavily into Rock 'n'Roll (I blame them for making me into an Everly Brothers fan!), I'd recommend this to anyone. Go see it

'Are You Lonesome Tonight?'

by Jennie Smith

On Saturday July 30th, I went to see 'Are You Lonesome Tonight' in Manchester. I was really looking forward to it. I'd already seen the show before, with Martin Shaw ((Sigh - HB)) and Michael Keating, but according to the programme I later unearthed, that was back in July, 1985. It certainly doesn't seem three years ago, I could vividly remember the show, and knew what I was in for.

For those of you who have seen the show already, you'll know the 'plot' and have formed your own opinions, good or bad, but for those of you who haven't:

I enjoyed myself immensely - more than I thought I would. Well, I ask you - what else could I do? I had Paul Darrow there in the flesh so to speak, and Elvis Presley music blasting out. Wonderful stuff!

For a start, I've been an Elvis Fan for as long as I can remember. My first record player was bought for me with an accompanying LP - Elvis 40 Greatest Hits - now well worn. I've watched all of his films, liking most of them, and I cried for hours when news of his death was released. I'm a fan, but not a fanatic, so if Paul Darrow didn't fit his image exactly, or if he couldn't sing and move like the 'King' I wasn't offended. I didn't expect him to.

When I first heard that Paul was to play the role of Elvis, I wasn't too sure. But then I'd been unsure of Martin Shaw's ability to portray Elvis, but happily proved wrong in both cases. Both actors looked different, yet similar. No doubt that horrendous purple 'thing' and the dark glasses helped.

The rest of the cast were very good, it was nice to see another B7 - John Wyman - 'in the flesh', rather than on video. Although Roger Alborough played the character of Marty really well, I'd have liked to have seen Michael Keating in the role again, thus having three former B7 actors together.

Sean Simon, as the younger Presley, was pretty good vocally, as was Paul as the elder Presley. Who said Paul couldn't sing? I didn't hear too many off notes - in fact, I don't remember hearing any, and he did sing quite a lot. And he could move - boy! Could he move! ((S'what I said! - HB))

The only thing wrong with the whole night - apart from coming out into pouring rain - but what else can you expect in Manchester? - was the lack of audience. I went on the last night, and the place seemed half-empty. I don't know what the rest of the week was like, better I hope. Where were you all?

I'll end by asking - are you a Paul Darrow fan? Are you an Elvis fan? If you can answer yes to either, or both, I suggest you buy a ticket, and go along to 'Are You Lonesome Tonight?' If you're not a fan of either, like my sister, still go along, you'll enjoy it anyway. She did, although

she said she still saw Paul as Avon, but dressed in purple and minus his gun. My one regret is that I only went the once.

I know that as reviews go, this didn't really review much, but the tour still has many weeks to go, and I'd hate to spoil it for others.

Go and see it!

.. .. .

Take Off To The Stars From London

by Elizabeth Everett

No I'm not kidding in my choice of title for this little article, because that is exactly what my friend - Maggie - and I did on a short stop-over in the Capital, this June.

The place in question is the newly opened 3001 Space Adventure in Tooley St. London, not far from the London Dungeons and Tower Bridge. Price is £3.50 for Adults. No-one under 3ft is allowed in, or anyone of nervous disposition etc.

The whole place is very authentic in what a space launch lounge will possibly be like in the year 3001. In this case it was a corridor rather than a lounge, but that is neither here nor there, if you see what I mean - or not - as the case maybe. All the staff were dressed in blue flight-suit uniforms, making me feel as though I ought to be in full regalia. (Space costume - in plain English!)

As we entered the launch pad, we felt that Mat Irvine had been in with his special effect-ive smoke as there was rather a lot of it around the steps leading up into the rear of the ship. All strapped in our seats with our baggage on our laps, we were greeted by our Commander via a monitor screen.

I won't spoil the fun, but you really do go off to Mars via it's satellites - Deimos and Phobos - to rescue two crew from a damaged Space-ship in Sector Nine decimal Seven, then a meteorite storm hits. Although there is damage to our ship, the Hyperspace-drive is still working and we get safely back to Earth.

Disembarking we are given a Commendation for our courage during the trip, in other words you survived! Following the corridor you first come into a gaming room with the usual conveniences straight ahead. To the right is the gift shop and the snack bar with automatic refreshments and nourishment machines, very handy after such a long trip!

It was a very exhilarating experience and well worth the money, especially when you consider that both Maggie and I, felt that our pilot had a certain Del Tarrant as an instructor on how - NOT - to fly a ship. Well, I ask you, who but Tarrant would suddenly wake-up to the fact that there was danger from meteorites, until he was well and truly in the middle of

the storm?!!!!

Despite that it is well worth a visit. So when next you're in the Capital, get the tube to London Bridge and have a safe (?) and happy flight

.. .. .

Destiny 2

by Jamie C. Ritchey

The weekend of Destiny 2 in Houston was spent with grey skies spouting intermittent drizzle, but no one seemed to mind. They all seemed quite content to stay in the hotel and enjoy themselves. Scheduled for March 25-27, 1988, we expected to have Paul Darrow and Michael Keating as our guests. But both had to cancel out during the last week of February, so we were scrambling to provide guests that our attendees would find interesting and fun. Terry Nation and Mark Ryan more than filled the bill. They both agreed to step in at the last minute, and none of the fans seemed disappointed. Terry Nation is well known and admired by everyone, but Mark Ryan was a new face to most Houston fans. 'Robin of Sherwood' was only carried on Showtime, a cable channel that not everyone has, and it had been a few years since it had been on. But before he left he had made many, many new fans with his charm and wonderful sense of humour.

The daytime hours on Friday and Saturday were taken up with the usual panels and autograph sessions with the guests. We tried to mix it up a bit and have something for everyone, not just the Blake's 7 fans, so there were panels on Doctor Who, Robin of Sherwood, Little Known Fandoms, Fan Fiction, and even an Avon Insult contest and Vagon Poetry contest. ((J.D. would have won that easily. Who remembers his Vagon Poem we printed in one of the zines? - HB)) We planned the evenings for everyone to let their hair down and get a little strange. On Friday, we held the SF versions of the game shows 'Jeopardy' and 'Family Feud' which we renamed 'Fandom Feud.' They were great ice-breakers, as complete strangers got together to form teams to compete. The games were such a success we plan to do them again next year.

Saturday night was the combined costume contest and cabaret which we called 'The Federation Follies'. We had sketches and costumes that covered the spectrum, including the 'Wicked Wenches of Wickham' singers, a silver-haired Soolin giving us the 'real' story of Xenon base, and yours truly in a costume modeled after Paul Darrow's in a Hammer House of Horror story called 'The Guardian of the Abyss.' I called myself 'The Abyssmal Guardian' and my companion/stand-in for 'Corunzun' (that's my best guess as to how that name is spelled) was a rubber chicken. The fan favourite was Houston's own James Doyle (our Captain Video who ran our video room operation) as Paul Darrow doing 'The King Of Rock and Roll.' As most everyone knows, Paul Darrow had to cancel out on our convention

because he got the part of Elvis in the play 'Are You Lonesome Tonight?' James called his little kit 'Are You Tone-Deaf Tonight?' Mark Ryan said later that James had Paul's speech patterns down perfectly when he intoned in his most serious Avonish tones 'It's...a...one...for...the...money,...and...two ...for...the...show.' and then stopped to count on his fingers what came next. When he left the stage, one member of the audience ran up the aisle after him waving her room key frantically shouting 'Elvis, Elvis!' It was hysterical.

Sunday was the brunch, art auction, awarding of contest prizes and closing ceremonies. By then, everyone was exhausted, but everyone I talked to before they left said they had a good time. We hoped so. We wanted our convention to be something the fans could participate in, not just sit and watch. For the most part, I think we succeeded.

((Are you going to be involved in the next one, Jamie? - HB))

Crossed Wires

The 'Time Distort' article I did a couple of issues back was really meant as only a very brief overview of what happens at speeds near that of light, but it seems to have received quite a reaction! The weird things that happen as you travel faster and faster become horribly complex and would happily fill several volumes of books! Unfortunately 'Peter The Pen' has brought up several points and a lot of inaccuracies as well. I will try to deal them as simply as possible and without taking up too much space in the N/L!

Tachyons (Particles which travel faster than light) are still a theory at the moment as we can not make them, nor can we detect any that may already exist. The only reason we think that such particles may exist at all is because of some relatively obscure applications of mathematical equations suggest they might! (Much like 'Gravitons' - particles of gravity). They would simplify a few things if they did exist, but at the moment they remain only an interesting possibility.

'Peter The Pen' is right to say you should refer to the 'Velocity' of light not 'speed.' This is certainly true up to A-level but after that you should realise that it is not true under all circumstances. The speed of light is NOT constant for a start, but depends on the 'optical density' of what the light is attempting to travel through. Light is a vector quantity only over relatively short distances. When travelling between stars, light shows decidedly scalar qualities! Space is curved for a start, then he is forgetting that the Space-Time Continuum is distorted by the very planets and stars themselves! They distort Space-Time and their gravity bends light around them (Re: The visibility of stars 'behind' the sun during eclipses). Finally, he also assumes that 'space' conforms to Euclidian Geometry, which it most certainly does not! Space is decidedly Non-Euclidian. When talking about space travel, light follows anything but straight lines, and so 'speed' of light as I said is more correct.

He said referring to 'speed' of light not 'velocity' was 'Forgiveable when there is no professor of physics to correct you.' That is nice of him considering I am correct not him! I have a further shock for him, I write scientific papers that are read by the very professors he is talking about. I am currently working on an article on 'Fluid Mechanics and their effects on structures immersed in low-viscosity liquids.' For the Special Interest Group in physics of Mensa (The High Intelligence Society).

He was wrong to say I implied that time stopping was the only thing 'stopping' you from reaching the speed of light. Time 'stopping' is an EFFECT of light speed travel, not in itself a limit. It does not 'stop' you at all, it is just something which happens at these speeds. As you travel faster and faster, time slows down until at the speed of light, someone on a planet looking at a clock on your ship would see time on your spaceship as having 'stopped' although to you time would seem to be normal on the ship, and time on the planets to be speeded up!

There is a simple equation called the 'Lorentz Transformation' that allows you to see how slow time seems to be running on a spaceship as it passes by you!

If T is how much time seems to have gone by on the spaceship as it passes you, then let Tp be the amount of time gone by on the planet on which you are stood. C is the Speed of Light (300,000,000 meters per second) and V is the velocity of the spaceship as it passes you. Then:

$$T = T_p \sqrt{1 - \left(\frac{V^2}{C^2}\right)}$$

Since time appears to slow down, mass increases and lengths shorten, travelling faster than light in our universe is said to be impossible. This is as far as science goes at the moment, what is likely to happen if you go faster than light, such as passing into another universe or another dimension, is still Science-Fiction and not Science Fact!

He goes on to make some serious mistakes about time travelling backwards if you were on a ship travelling faster than light. As far as we know, if you were on a ship travelling faster than light, then time on the ship would still appear to be normal, but if you looked out at a planet, then time on that planet would appear to be running backwards, just like a video in reverse.

He then failed to understand basic nuclear physics. A neutron is made when a proton and an electron combine giving off a photon (Just as happens in neutron stars). An electron is quite happy to go into 'orbit' around a proton forming a hydrogen atom (not a hydrogen nuclei as he said, Nuclei are just the centres of atoms, not the electrons surrounding them). The nuclei of hydrogen atoms are just protons. It requires a lot of energy to push the electron and proton closer together so they form a neutron. Superconducting magnets are just being developed now may make it easier to do. Anyone in terested

should check page 25 of 'New Scientist' for 25/2/88 where America is already attempting projects along these lines as is China.

His point 3 is also totally incorrect. Plasma is indeed an ionised gas as he said, but when you turn off a magnetic field containing a plasma, the plasma is released, destroying everything in its vicinity. Space is a nearly perfect vacuum, so plasma would not remain in a 'bolt' without a magnetic field to contain it. It would need a magnetic field to contain it right until the moment of 'impact' allowing the plasma to escape, destroying everything around it. All this would mean 'firing' a machine at the target (The machine would be there only to generate the magnetic field to hold in the plasmas until the right moment! This probably wouldn't look like the flaring ball of plasma we see in the spidoes. Instead it might be better to use a solid block of metal called Lithirm as is used in hydrogen bombs already. This would probably be a lot easier, and it would be sensible for plasma bolts to be developed from today's hydrogen bombs.

Open University programmes can give a lot more details on these types of subjects, and they explain them in fairly simple language. The ones this year that may be of interest include:

UNDERSTANDING SPACE AND TIME

BBC2 14/5/88 11:50 am 'E=MC²'
BBC2 9/7/88 11:50 am 'A Matter Of Geometry'
BBC2 17/9/88 11:50 am 'Shades of Black'

DISCOVERING PHYSICS

BBC2 30/7/88 08:30 am 'Special Relativity'
BBC2 24/9/88 08:55 am 'Absurd Stars: The Physics of White Dwarfs'

INTRODUCTION TO PURE MATHEMATICS

BBC1 23/7/88 06:45 am 'A Non-Euclidean Geometry'
BBC2 18/9/88 08:55 am 'Space-Time Geometry'

by Anthony King B.M. (Hons).

((Thanks Anthony, I understood bits of it. I think that's rather clever of me since I never did anything very scientific at school - though I did get 72% in Physics once.....I loved playing with the ticker-tape! Before Peter The Pen gets his pen out, please note: End of discussion on 'Speed of Light'. How about covering 'Teleportation' next time? We did have a section on this a long time ago, but it was discussed only by us mere mortals. I'd like to hear what you physical types think of it.....if you'll pardon the expression - HB))

((A new section to be N/L, where you can send messages to other members of the club without having to go to the lengths of an LoC. Only clean messages will be printed! - HB))

Decoder!

TO: SEALE

FROM: KADY

I like Fleah and Blood, but would you rather take a hitch with the Hitcher? Deep Respects!

Delayed Reaction

Reply To The Why
(Tarrant is Servalan's ToyBoy)

by Nicola Barnard

(VERY laboured rhyme there.....erm, sorry)

Although I may not agree with all of Fliss's article on Tarrant and Servalan one thing I can understand is Tarrant falling for Servalan.

Apart from being gormless, vain, and unable to understand why all women don't fall at his feet.....alright, Tarrant-Fans stop jumping up and down, I'll make this a reasonably) balanced article. ((Isn't that a bit late now!? - HB))

To start with, Tarrant has already shown a tendency towards falling for a pretty face (Piri, later Zeeona) and when confronted with Servalan who is not merely pretty but stunningly beautiful and with a magnetic personality aswell, it is not surprising he is bowled over. In the way of personality Piri and Zeeona had nothing much to recommend either of them except helplessness and a desire to hero-worship.

Both these qualities attract Tarrant who likes to feel manly and protective towards his women-folk - at least the ones he wants to honour with his attentions. I don't notice Dayna, Soolin or Cally, all very much their own persons, being given much of a come-on. In the famous 'bonding-scene' in Ultraworld, Tarrant has to be virtually shown what to do! ((I think we've been watching different shows, re: Dayna, Cally and Soolin, and as for the bonding-ceremony....would you be happy about 'performing' for an audience!? He seems to begin to enjoy it as time went by - HB))

So, Tarrant likes to be in control and protective to bring out the best in him. Thus in Sand, he is presented with his almost perfect ideal. A woman who is usually very much in control actually in his power/under his protection - I think Tarrant gets very blurred at that point. But despite Servalan being 'under his protection' she loses none of her charisma, her magnetic appeal. It is hardly surprising Tarrant falls a victim.

Don't misunderstand me, I think Tarrant still knew his danger. Despite his feeling worry for her (over Keller etc) he never forgot that their relationship might be one of black widow and mate. Hence his remarks about 'the girl next door; and him moving. ((Anyone who has read their B7 monthlies know that this was a spur of the moment inclusion in the script - HB)) He still allowed his attraction to blur his judgement though, and was lucky not to get killed. (If I was Servalan, I would have! Sorry - I withdraw that remark.....)

The other factor that may have been in his mind was Avon's relationship with Servalan. Now this is a very tenuous link as it is difficult to say how much Tarrant knew or guessed. But assuming he knew anything at all, it would be an added attraction for him to be in a position of power and/or a relationship with Servalan, who he probably thought Avon considered his property. ((Would Avon have been naive enough to have thought that? - HB))

So, it is not surprising that Tarrant fell head over stiletto heels for Servalan. The only thing is....I can't believe Servalan had the bad taste! I like to think that it was only the influences of the sand on already over charged emotional nerves, or that she was using him. ((Why couldn't the sand have the same effect on Tarrant? - HB)) I mean - fancy putting up with Tarrant when she could have had Avon!! ((Wasn't he still on the ship though? -HB)) (Who is more intelligent than Tarrant as anyone, even a Taargian Warg Strangler knows!) Oh well, there's no accounting for taste.....

((Thanks Nicola. Okay, how about a few replies out there? Actually, as an Avon fan I can't understand why other Avon fans hate Tarrant! I don't, and he's a great character to write for.....s'pose he's just misunderstood! - HB))

- Ye Gods! That was the only article for 'Delayed Reaction'. Did everyone out there die!?? -

No 'Blake's Seven Summed Up this time round, I wonder if I can con Jane into writing 'Breakdown' up for me.....Jane! My wonderful, bestest (only!) sister!.....

Rebel With A Cause

Taste of Victory

The raid went well, the Federation Communications Centre will be inoperative for weeks! We took them completely by surprise. They really didn't think we'd be cunning enough to break in, shoot their guards and escape again, but we did. If only Blake knew of our existence, he'd be so proud of what we're doing for 'The Cause.' One day this will be a free planet again, even if it takes our children's children to finish the fight.

We assemble now, to lick our wounds, celebrate the victory and toast the stupidity of the people who have decided to rule here. They say they have highly trained troops, but they don't realise how lax they are. We fight better, we have an ideal to chase they have nothing. We fight and we win, they only kill for the pleasure of it.

A toast my friends, to Victory!!

FEDERATION REPORT

Body count on the recent attack by rebels on the Targen F.C.C.

Rebels Killed in action - 15

Rebels Wounded in action - 27

Rebels Captured and questioned - 5

Federation Troopers Killed in action - 3

Federation Troopers Wounded in action - 7

Federation Troopers Captured by Rebels - 0

REPORT ENDS

Rebel Voice

((Our next author couldn't think of a title for her story, but she told me that it's 'Pretty Weird' so that's the title.... s'not my fault, I can't even find titles for my stories!! - HB))

Pretty Weird

by Lianne Parkinson

It was a normal sort of day on the Liberator. "I'm bored," Vila moaned as he trudged around the flight deck in his fluffy Mr. Bunny slippers.

"So what's new?" Dayna said sarcastically. Her knitting was coming on well. She held it up. "Do you think Tarrant will like it?" she asked. "Turquoise and yellow are just his colours."

She admired her handiwork. It was the best thing she had made since the shocking pink mohair gun warmer she made for Avon. She did wonder why he had never used it.

"I know," he said vaguely. "Lets see if there are any viscasts? Now the Federation is gone there are some decent programmes on." Vila looked a bit happier.

"Oh alright, but don't let Avon catch you. You know he doesn't like people fiddling with things," Dayna warned.

"Where are Avon and Cally anyway?"

"They're checking the records of all the cacti they have collected. They are sure they're a Davidbellemi Brittanicus short."

"Oh," said Vila.

Since the Federation had gone, the Liberator had been

turned into a jungle of every kind of plant in the universe and Zen had been turned into a gardeners encyclopedia.

Vila spoke to Orac. "Orac, see if there are any decent viscasts floating about will you? There's a good lady."

"My purpose as a viscast transmitter is a frivelous one and I will only obey you under protest!"

"Just do it, Orac!" Vila snapped.

The main screen flickered into life. "SUPER SWAP SIX, THE SUPER SWAP SIX," rattled over the air waves. "TRADE IN YOUR OLD COMPUTER FOR ONE OF THE SUPER SWAP SIX - ONLY 297 CREDITS."

"Boring Orac; there must be something on," Vila whined.

"Please be patient, I am trying," Orac retorted.

At that moment Tarrant came waddling onto the flight deck in his fluffy night-gown and heated rollers. Dayna spotted him at once and quickly sat on the knitting.

"Hello everyone, what are we all doing?" Tarrant asked. He now insisted that everyone called him Derek. If you didn't he gave you the cold shoulder.

"Oh nothing," Vila said boredly.

"Nothing, nothing at all." Dayna's voice had gone up in pitch. Something to do with the knitting needles!

"Oh that's nice. I'm just setting my hair. These heated rollers are a nightmare, they get all tangled."

Suddenly the communicator sounded. "BING BONG."

"Avon calling," Tarrant said brightly.

"Vila, Dayna, Tar...Derek, get down to Cally's cabin... ..and bring a respirator," Avon said.

The three looked at each other then in a cloud of dust, papers and wool (and the odd roller) they were gone. They pushed through the foliage and found their way to the medical unit for a respirator, then to Cally's cabin. When they arrived Cally was on the floor and Avon was sticking the window down with sellotape.

"What happened?" they all said at once.

"Cally tried to hang a window box," Avon answered, turning from the repairs he had made. "She was nearly sucked out,"

"Is she alright?" Dayna yelled.

"I'll make a nice cup of tea," Tarrant said helpfully.

Cally slowly came round. "Oh Avon! You saved my life. I am so silly!"

"No comment!" said Avon.

Tarrant, by now, had reached the flight deck and had plugged the electric kettle into Zen. He pottered over to the couch and picked up Dayna's knitting.

"This will make a nice tray cloth," and it fitted perfectly. In the meantime Orac was still bubbling and gurgling in the corner.

"I've found a viscast which may interest you," he said smugly.

"Oh have you," Tarrant cried gleefully, "what is it?"

"SPACE ENDERS."

"Oh whoopee! I'll get the others."

No need, they all marched on to the flight deck arm in arm singing Zipperdy-do-da Zipperdy-day, my oh my what a wonderful day.

Tarrant bounced up and down in his fleecy night gown, shedding a few rollers.

"Come on, Space Enders is about to start!"

"Oh goody!" Vila exclaimed.

"Here everyone," Tarrant held up the tray, "a nice cup of tea."

Dayna looked around the flight deck. "Tar...Derek, have you seen my knitting?" she asked suspiciously.

"Oh, I don't know. The only thing I've seen is a piece of horrid blue and yellow sewing, I used it as a tray cloth."

Tarrant stood holding the tray out and smiling. Dayna walked up to him and eyed it up and down.

"That's my knitting!"

She whipped the jumper from the tray, the tea, milk, sugar, cups, saucers and biscuits all landed on Tarrant. Tarrant's hair parted down the middle as the tea and milk ran down his face in brown streams. The biscuits stuck between each roller and some even went in his pockets.

Avon and Cally nonchalantly walked past. Vila strolled up to Tarrant and gave the whimpering man an amused look. He stroked his finger across Tarrant's cheek and tasted the result.

"Not bad.....could do with more sugar though!"

THE END

((At the end, Lianne put a P.S. - I hope all this is alright (I've never written another story). Lianne....keep taking the tablets! - HB))

.. .. .

((And now a word from her sister.....))

In Two Minds

by Helen Parkinson

What do you do when you've killed your closest friend?

Only friend.

Correction, Vila is my friend too.

Was your friend, you tried to kill him,

Remember?

I remember.

Oh yes, I remember, I'm not likely to forget, am I?

Do you think Vila forgot?

Could ever forget?

No.

But he forgave you.

Yes, he forgave me, but I killed him, here.

I'm a dangerous man.

Only to your friends.

I have no friends.

Not now.

I have only memories, of faces and betrayal.

Of Blake?

Yes, of Blake.

And Vila?

Vila, Gally, even Tarrant.

All of them.

All dead.

I know!

But you're still alive Avon.

I know.

What will you do now you've killed
all your friends?

.. .. .

Life is Too Short

by Clare Nicholson

Blake and Avon waded through the bodies and carefully picked up the crystals that they needed to repair the Liberator. They had landed on a planet called Lefta IV and hoped to negotiate the purchase of the dion crystals needed to repair the life support which had been failing due to an earlier battle, but the men found that somebody had apparently been there before them.

"Okay," said Blake, as he put the last of the crystals into his pocket, "let's go."

"Vila, bring us up," Avon spoke into his communication bracelet.

The two men shimmered and vanished from the surroundings of bodies and wreckage, to reappear having Vila grinning at them. Avon wasn't sure which was worse!

"Well, that was easy," said Vila.

"So easy even you could have done it, Vila," Blake replied, smiling.

"What happened down there?"

"A lot of shooting had happened," said Avon stiffly.

Vila frowned. "But by who?"

"And why?" continued Blake.

A little later in the control room, Jenna picked up a minor disturbance on her instruments.

"Zen," she asked, "is there another ship in our area?"

"Confirmed."

"Well, any identification?"

"The craft is of an unknown origin and is only capable of carrying two humanoids."

"Oh screen, Zen," ordered Avon.

The screen showed a small ship with a strange insignia on the side.

"Any body seen that before?" asked Blake, looking around.

Nobody replied.

"Try communication, Cally!" ordered Blake.

Cally tried on all channels, waited a few moment and then received a reply.

"I've got something Blake," she said.

"This.....is..Zola.....I need....help....can you assist?" said a distressed voice.

"This is the Liberator," replied Blake. "Zola, what do you want?"

"I'm desperate," replied Zola. "I've been to Lefta IVnothing..... Haveyou got it?"

"We do not understand. What do you want, Zola?"

"Cossa," replied Zola.

Blake switched off transmission. "Anybody know what 'Cossa' is?"

Jenna said, "I'm not certain, but I think it's a type of drug."

"Drugs!" Vila shivered.

"Bring him in, we may be able to help," said Blake.

"Why?" asked Avon. "He murdered those people on Lefta, why bring him here?"

"Just do it, Jenna," ordered Blake.

Jenna moved her hands over the controls to home in on the new craft. Avon said nothing.

Zola turned out to be an Earthlike humanoid of the same height as Avon. He was handsome but looked very ill. He sat down on the couch and stared at Blake.

"I need it!" he kept repeating.

"What's wrong with him?" asked Vila.

"I'm not sure. Orac, can you identify what's wrong?" ordered Avon.

"Zola is a diabetic," replied Orac.

"We've got drugs to cure that," said Vila, and he hurried off to get what he needed.

"You'll be alright," soothed Cally. "Just sit tight!"

It wasn't long before Vila returned and Avon had given Zola a shot of the drug 'Mala' which would cure the diabetic condition. For a while the ill man slept but he soon came round, and he began chatting with the crew.

"I lived on the planet Co-Tek until the Federation moved in only a few months ago. I could not get hold of the drug 'Cossa' I needed to stay alive, but I heard the Federation

manufactured a drug to cure my condition on Lefta. I was going insane and so on Lefta I killed because they would not give me the drug. I had no money."

"You're safe now," said Cally.

"We saw what you did down there," said Avon. "We needed crystal to repair Liberator."

"How can I thank you? You have saved my life," said Zola.

"What will you do now?" asked Vila.

"Now," smiled Zola, "I am free."

The crew saw Zola back to his ship and said goodbye.

Zola flew away in his small craft, free.

At her console, Jenna reported. "A Federation ship, and it's on interception course with Zola."

The crew took their positions in the control room.

"Zola's in range of the Federation ship," shrieked Jenna.

"Interception course, now," ordered Blake.

The Liberator sped towards the battle ground where the Federation ship and Zola had opened fire on each other.

As the crew watched the smaller craft was hit by fire from the opposition. The small craft swooped down, turned and climbed after the Federation ship. Another shot sent Zola off balance again, this time spinning then exploding into millions of fragments.

"In range," said Zen.

"Fire!" ordered Blake, in anger.

The Federation ship was caught full on by the blast and it too exploded.

The crew sat in silence and fragments of the two ships vanished into space. Feelings were meaningless in this situation - hatred, horror, shock - how were they meant to feel?

.. ..

Maelstrom

by Helen Parkinson

At dawn today awoke a feeling
Deep within my soul.
And though I sit so near the fire
My bones are chilled and cold.
I don't know if I fear it,
Or welcome it at last,
But death is coming nearer
And rising from the past
Are faces now, and memories
And dreams I buried deep.
The people and the places
I thought it hell to keep.
I can't shut out their voices,
Or fail to hear their song.
The clamour of their torment,
Has waited far too long.
But someone's coming to me
A friend I hope but fear
That fate may use his friendship

Life's last great debt to clear.
It's dark and cold within me
The light that I once bore
Was doused by pain and death,
By betrayal, hate and war.
I'm not the man I was when
Our hopes and dreams were born
When we alone would conquer all
To hail life's brand new dawn.
I'm now too old to carry on,
Too dark, and cold, and tired,
Too sick at heart to see the hope
I no longer am inspired.
You were right in what you told me
About mankind's true lot
The leadership that we deserved
Was exactly what we got.
So I'm waiting for you, Avon,
Your mind so cool and clear
You'll show me how to carry on,
You'll end at last my fear.
The feeling grows within my soul
After so long alone
I must be there to greet him
My brother's coming home.
I don't know if he loves me,
I thought that once he did
But on his love I can't depend
Empty hopes no way to live.
I trusted you, my brother
And meant truly what I said
But Avon I'm not the man I was
Avon, he may be dead.
But here I'm waiting for you
Your judgement I'll accept
Whatever you demand of me
I'll give to pay the debt.
I owe you life but more than this
I owe you trust and hope
I made you care for unknown hordes
That's madness slippery slope.
I can't tell what you'll bring me
Are there others by your side,
Or like me are you now alone.
Have all your true friends died.
When I first saw you coming
It was as if I already knew
That you alone were my destiny
Fates matched pair we were, we two.
Dark and light they may have called us
Those who didn't know the truth
As betrayal marred your early days
Obsession stole my youth.
I don't know yet for certain
Why you're coming here at last.
Only that the dice of fate
For life or death are cast.

Avon come now quickly
Show me what I must do
I've waited long to see again
My half that's sealed in you.
I'll abide by your decision
Go where ever you demand
And if to death it has to be,
I'll go by your own hand.
I never meant to hurt you
To take more than you could give.
I never thought to ask you
What life you wished to live.
I'm sorry if I hurt you
But I did want you to care
I'm sorry if I drove you
Searching for what was never there.
It is finally, really finished
Because I can't go on alone,
The dead that stand behind me
Want me now to atone.
So Avon, if you're coming
Come quickly to my side.
If death at last must claim me
I must prove I never lied.
I trusted you, always
Though you did your best to show
That you weren't worth the effort
Avon, the truth I know.
The cold is growing stronger
And numbing now my brain
I'll welcome it, and the darkness
In it's shadow hides my pain.
Please come before the horror
Has crushed me in its vice
Come and share my destiny
Together we'll find the price.

.. .. .

The Last Chance

by Nicola Barnard

"Hurry up."

"Shh, I'm working as fast as I can. You don't think a security system like this just pops open like magic, do you?"

"No, but nor do I think that the security guard - who passes every fifteen minutes - thinks so either."

"There."

With a clicking sound the door opened. The smaller man caught his breath but the silence remained unbroken. Heaving a sigh of relief, he pulled it fully open and the two men slipped inside.

"That was close, Vila, too close!" Avon whispered as they watched a large man in a black uniform pass by outside.

"I got us in, didn't I? What more do you want? And it was tough too - one of the toughest. Count yourself lucky we got this far. Anyway, big-shot, its your turn now - I almost wish you'd mess it up, just for the look on your face...."

"Don't be a fool, Vila. You know who these people are - and what they can do. It's not the Federation this time. These people have real power, and they're not afraid of using it. If we're caught it will be as though we've never existed - and there's not a damn thing anyone can do about it."

"I know, I know. It's just nerves. I keep thinking - this could be the end."

"Come on. We can't waste any more time."

Quietly they picked their way across the gigantic entrance hall in the huge space. Vila shivered.

"If they didn't leave this place unmanned at night we wouldn't stand a chance," he whispered.

"I know. It's their only mistake. - one of overconfidence. Luckily for us. This way."

He gestured to a pair of doors and pressed the button alongside. They slid apart and silently the two men entered. Other buttons decorated the inside and Avon studied them with deep concentration. Vila was getting jumpy.

"Come on," he hissed. "They can't be in code - ordinary employees use this building every day."

"Yes, but security cleared employees," Avon hissed back, irritated by Vila's constant moaning. "Ah.....that's it."

The doors slid shut with a sigh and the entire room began moving. Vila didn't actually scream - he had heard of such things existing in Alpha areas, but by no means was he feeling comfortable. It was with intense relief that he tumbled out at the designated floor. Avon was looking thoughtful.

"With technology like that in their possession," he murmured. "I can understand their power."

But with regret he turned away from the idea of dismantling it there and then - time was growing too short.

The two men walked down the revealed corridor to a locked office door. Avon just gestured and Vila, with a sigh, bent and opened it in seventeen seconds flat. He was grinning as he turned to Avon.

"That was a lot easier than I expected."

"I told you - overconfidence."

They entered and Avon's eyes gleamed as they lit upon the computer terminal he and Vila were there to find.

Quickly how he moved over to it and sat down. On-line functions were achieved in seconds and soon the message PASSWORD was flashing repeatedly on the screen.

Hesitantly Avon gazed at it with trepidation. Now he would find out if the key code they had paid so much for was worth the computer read-out it was printed on. He shook off his feelings of doubt. It was now or never.

He typed in the words CHRI SBOU CHER. The computer beeped and began pouring data across the screen.

Avon relaxed with a sigh and wiped his sweaty palms on his trouser leg. The worst was over. He became aware of Vila watching intently.

"Why couldn't Orac have got this lot?" he asked perplexedly.

With the taste of sweet success in his mouth, Avon actually deigned to answer him.

"This is a computer of such sophistication, Vila, that it does not use the tariel cell. Orac couldn't even penetrate its outer levels. It needed a key word inputed at a specific terminal in a specific building to reach what we needed to know."

He bent to the keyboard and began organising the data as it streamed past, trying to find the section that applied to them.

With a cry he reached it and the screen cleared. Slowly his face grew hard as he read the resulting information, then with the quiet despair he pushed himself away from the terminal.

"We're too late, Vila. Damn it, we're too late!"

Vila leaned forward and read the first line.

"'Scheduled for cancellation.' What's it mean?"

"It means us. We're finished. This is one of the computers the BBC uses as scriptwriters: codename 'CHRI SBOU CHER.' It's analysed the ratings, public opinion, inputs and outputs and in view of our cost - we're too popular. Do you understand, Vila?"

Vila looked aghast. He understood only too well.

"But I thought we solved that problem - got rid of Blake and Jenna, introduced two gun-happy killers in their place, had me drinking and you gratuitously shooting people. What more does it take to put people off?" He sat down, obviously upset.

"I know, I know. But we miscalculated - its obviously not enough. Too late now though. According to that..." he pointed to the computer, "we have three more episodes, then... a rather messy ending on a planet called Terminal. How appropriate - the BBC's idea of a joke, no doubt."

Vila didn't laugh. "Isn't there anything we can do?" he cried miserably. "Alter the designation, change the schedule or something!?"

Avon suddenly stilled, a frozen look on his face. "Of course! I must be getting old or I would have thought of it before - from this terminal I can alter the designation."

He burst into furious activity, keeping up a monologue under his breath as he completed each change.

"Best not alter it too much. Too noticable for a start. Destroy the Liberator - yes. Save Servalan though - yes. Kill Cally - how unfortunate but its my survival at stake here - yes, done it. Introduce another blood-thirsty killer in her place - that should put them off. Badly designed new ship with hardly any gadgets to hold the childrens attention - yes, perfect. Add Vila's drunkenness and increased alcoholism to alienate the mothers, and my madness and wanton murders.....if that doesn't succeed, nothing will!"

He turned back to Vila in triumph. "I think I have just saved our lives. We can't be popular now. Therefore the BBC will have no reason to cancel us."

But Vila was looking worried, somehow it all seemed too easy. He had this feeling.....

"Are you sure, Avon? I'm too young to die for a good long while yet."

Avon was beaming - a rare enough event in itself. "I promise you, you have nothing to worry about for a long time yet, Vila. It's my life too remember - and I'm always the survivor. Relax. When have I ever let you down.....?"

THE END

Last Thoughts

by Helen Parkinson

Blake!
Screamed his mind
Betrayed
But a single thread held out
And said
No.
Dead!
Cried his soul
Murderer
And the single thread snapped
As sanity let
Go.

- - - - -

A Broken Man

by Helen Parkinson

His mind slipped from the truth
His soul was buried deep.
Horror stole his consciousness,
Terror ruled his sleep.
When he began he had believed
That what he did was right.
But time has passed and truth is seen
Darkness has the might.
He gathered round, and sheltered with
The strong he could control
And lost them all to death's cold grip.
Guilt gnaws his very soul.
Doomed to fail 'ere he began
His universe to shake
He never listened to Avon's voice.
Admit him right now, Blake

SHOP SOILED

We have a few additions and a few deletions this time round again, so read carefully in case you miss something.

ZINES

ZINE AID IS STILL AVAILABLE! We no-longer have any copies of Zine Aid I left, so if you wanted a copy you're just too late. However..... Nos II, III, and IV are still fairly widely available. £2.00 + A4 flat envelope or and 24p stamp, or £2.35 p&p inc. (Overseas members check the flyers we have send you all in the past for prices. Those within flyers please send 2 IRCs for details). This Zines are available from the clubb address

TALISMAN (ROS) A tale where lives from the past and present meet in a whirl wind of magic and mystery. £2.00 inc p&p (£3.50 IMO or \$5.00 US Bill). Available from club address.

STANDARD BY SEVEN - THE EARLY YEARS. A5 booklet, 48 pages, artwork by David Bowden. £3.00 inc p&p payable to Ann Bown. Available from: Miss A. O'Neill, 38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Nr. Reading, Berks. RG7 3UY

FACE TO FACE (TAT) send SAE for full listing to: Susan Taylor, 141 Kingswell Road, Ensby Park, Bournemouth, Dorset. BH10 5DQ

RELATIVE ENCOUNTERS - Anthology zine of MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. stories etc. Issues 1 & 2 available, 100+ pages. £2.00 each UK (\$10.00 overseas). SASE for full details of zines available to:- Jay Felton, 'Cloudbase,' 54 St. Mary's Road, Leyton, LONDON. E10 5RB

STARFUNK PRESS (B7) Zines inc. the 'Rebel' series. SAE for full listings to: Elizabeth Everett, 71 Greenland Road, Worthing, West Sussex. BN13 2RW

KNIGHT 2000 (KR) is just one zine available from: Ms. B. Callagner, 195 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset. DT4 0TQ. SAE for full details.

CLUBS

T.A.T. (TAT) SAE to: Karen Rowland, 275 Ladyshot, Harlow, Essex. CM20 3EY (Recommended)

FREEDOM LEAGUE (V) More than just a fan club! For full details write to: The membership Secretary, Ms. J.A. Wrighton, 30 Borodin Close, Brighton Hill, Basingstoke, Hants. RG22 4EN (Recommended)

ROBIN HOOD BRIGADE (V) SAE for full details to: Ms. Fran Ward, 1 Lydford Flats, Peacemarsh, Gillingham, Dorset. SP8 4EY
FPS (B7) The Freedom Party Services, SAE to: David Metcalfe, 102 Higherhouse Close, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancs. OL9 8LF
VILAWORLD (B7) SAE to: Yvette Clarke, 85 Brendon Green, Emsbrook, Southampton. (Recommended)

AVCN (B7) SAE to: Mrs. A. Bown, 37a Byfleet Ave, Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hants.

NETWORK (UNCLE), A quarterly discussion/letterzine. SAE for more details: J. Felton, 'Cloudbase', 54 St. Mary's Road, Leyton, London.

Our ex-proof reader Jan and a friend of her's are going to start a 'Sledge Hammer' fan club (they already have 10 members!) She did give me an ad to print, but I lost it (Sorry Jan!!!) for now, if you write to me (club address) I'll pass the letter on. Promise to do a proper ad. next time if you send me the details again Jane.....honist!!!!

Stage 8 - (Star Trek - The Next Generation). A new club for a new series. All those interested in more details send an S.A.E. to: Stage 8, c/o Ms Linda Hepden, 85 Eastwick Row, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Herts. HP2 7DU (England)

Conventions

DESTINY 2 (B7) 2 IRCs for details to: Destiny, PO Box 1766, Bellaire, TX 77401, USA
ZEN CON II (B7) The 1988 Nat. Media SF con. 2 IRCs to PO Box 437, Camperwell, 3124, Australia.

MISC ADS

IMAGINE REALITY Merchandise for many a show. For full list 9x6 SAE to Ms. L. Hepden, 85 Eastwick Row, Adeyfield, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 4JQ

5-1 Chance 'Special Avon Raffle' (In Aid Of Charity). To be drawn at SPACE CITY - by Paul Darrow. Tickets 50p each or £2.00 for 5. Available from: Elizabeth Everett, 71 Greenland Road, Wrothing, West Sussex. BN13 2RW. Please mark top of envelope 'TSAR' also enc. SASE for return of ticket(s). (SAE & 2 IRCs overseas). Make cheques etc payable to Elizabeth Everett

NORTH WEST B.7. MEETINGS Anyone welcome to come along. We have a few things planned for B7's 10th anniversary year. Contact: Sue Christian, 14 The Carters, Copy Farm, Netherton, Merseyside. L30 7QW

Members Merch.

The following ads have been placed by members of the club. Those with stars against will not be repeated unless requested or an update given. Thank you.

The B.7.S & B.F.C. is non-profit making and is a FREE Fan Service. I usually despatch all orders within 12 hours. Please make all cheques/Postal Orders payable to Anthony King and post to: Anthony King, B.7.S & B.F.C., 30 Midlothian Street, Clayton, Manchester. M11 4EP.
(Anthony offers all kinds of B7 merch. including tapes and memorabilia)

Ms. Lynda Harrild has a great deal to sell (far more than I can print in one zine), including tapes, books and zines. For a full list of what's available send an S.A.E to: Lynda Harrild, 127 Mill Street, Torrington, N. Devon. EX38 8AW

Wanted: Photos of Peter Vaughn, Clarke from Tellycon 87. Contact Jan Harley, 41 Dovers Park, Bathford, Bath, Avon. BA1 7UD.
Also, Does anyone know anywhere I can get a con. video of Tellycon 87?